

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

56 3149

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Petworth Branch Library
Other names/site number: Petworth Neighborhood Library
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A



(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 4200 Kansas Avenue, N.W.
City or town: Washington State: D.C. County: _____
Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
X A ___ B X C ___ D

DAVID MALONEY / DC SHPO 10/12/2018
Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date
DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ Date

Title : _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

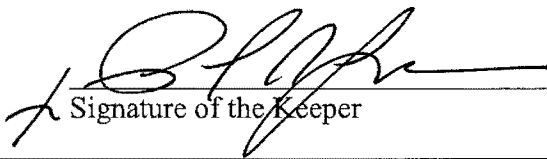
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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____


Signature of the Keeper

12/3/2010
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION /Library

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/Library

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

20th CENTURY REVIVALS/Georgian Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The red brick, Georgian Revival-style library building at 4200 Kansas Avenue NW in the Petworth neighborhood of Washington, D.C. was built in 1938-39 according to designs developed by the Office of the Municipal Architect then under the leadership of Nathan C. Wyeth. It was one of several libraries built as part of an effort by the city to expand library services to city neighborhoods. Its design is emblematic of the work of the Office of the Municipal Architect and is an excellent example of its type, style and period of construction. Construction of the library was funded through the Civil Works Administration (CWA) administered through the Public Works Administration (PWA). Originally known as the Petworth Branch Library, the library is currently called the Petworth Neighborhood Library.

The library consists of a two-story, three-part red brick Georgian Revival-style structure with a central pavilion and side wings. As designed, the central pavilion featured a steep hipped roof with dormers and a wooden cupola and side wings covered by gable roofs and buttressed by wide end chimneys. The building's overall massing, and details, including limestone quoining, classical door entablatures, twelve-over-twelve windows under jack arches and other brick detailing offer a high-quality and academic interpretation of the Georgian Revival style for which Wyeth is known. The style reflects the influence of the contemporary restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, as well as the Commission of Fine Arts' preference for domestic-feeling "colonial" architecture for neighborhood-serving public facilities. The interior of the building also features a high degree of detailing from paneled fireplace surrounds to wainscoting and vaulted passageways between rooms.

In 2009, Petworth Library underwent a major renovation. The District Department of General Services restored the historic wood windows and constructed the building's cupola, which, although part of the original building design, had never been erected. New systems and facilities

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including updated elevators and bathrooms were installed, while historic finishes and furniture were restored.

Narrative Description

Site

The Petworth Library is located at the southeast corner of a large triangular parcel of land bounded by Iowa Avenue, NW, Kansas Avenue, NW, Upshur Street, N.W., Thirteenth Street, NW, and Allison Street, NW within the Petworth neighborhood of northwest DC. The large parcel includes three public buildings: Roosevelt High School, MacFarland Junior High School, and the Petworth Library. The library occupies a small corner of the larger site and is orientated to face Kansas Avenue between Upshur Street and Georgia Avenue. The athletic stadium of Roosevelt High School abuts the rear of the library to the northwest, while a narrow parking lot for library patrons is located north of the library and accessible from Iowa Avenue at the building's side and rear. Concrete sidewalks with stairs lead from the sidewalk along Kansas Avenue to the main entrance to the library. The front lawn along Kansas Avenue contains scattered mature trees and is enclosed by a wrought-iron fence ending at a brick retaining wall at the south end of the property.

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The Petworth Library is a Georgian Revival-style three-part brick building. The building is comprised of a two-and-one-half story central block and two-story gabled wings extending from the north and south ends of the central block.

The Central Block

The central block of the library is a three-bay-wide rectangular structure capped by a slate-clad hipped roof. The central block has brick exterior walls laid in a common bond brick pattern with a symmetrical arrangement of 12/12 wood replacement windows on the first story and 8/12 windows on the second story to either side of and above a central entry door. The corners of both the east (front) and west (rear) elevations are accented by limestone quoins. The roof has a slight overhanging eave containing modillions. A wood cornice extends along the upper portion of the exterior walls below the roof eaves. The roof also contains three hipped dormers with six-over-six, double-hung windows on both the east and west elevations. A hexagonal cupola with 24-light windows is located in the center of the roof surrounded by a spindled wood balustrade. Although designed in 1938-39, the cupola was not built until 2009, according to the original plans (**Images 1 and 2**).

The east (front), three-bay elevation consists of a central entry flanked by windows on the first story and three symmetrically arranged windows above. The single metal door and sidelights are replacements to the original pair of wood doors, but the 10-light transom above survives, and the whole is recessed into the façade with an engaged wood surround. The surround features Ionic columns supporting an entablature with a three-part architrave and plain frieze, surmounted by a

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projecting cornice with dentils. Two decorative urns sit above the columns and atop the cornice. Flanking the entrance on the elevation are twelve-over-twelve, double-hung wood replacement windows with jack-arched brick lintels and queen closers. The second story contains three, 8/12 double-hung wood replacement windows with jack-arched brick lintels and queen closers.

The west (rear) elevation of the central block features has three symmetrically arranged windows on both floors and in the dormers. In the center of the first story is a bowed, bay window with a large thirty-six-light fixed window in the center and 9/9 double-hung windows to either side. All of the windows have been replaced but retain their original configurations.

The central block is covered with a hipped roof, clad with slate, and features three hipped dormers on both the east and west slopes, all with 6/6 wood windows. The hipped roof is flat on top and capped by a cupola with a flat balustrade surrounding it. The cupola is hexagonal in plan, set upon a wood base, and covered with a hexagonal-shaped onion-dome-type roof. The roof is clad with metal and has raised ribs between the different sections. Each face of the cupola has 24-light windows stretching almost the full length of the structure. A metal steeple extends approximately eight feet above finial ball at the apex of the roof.

The north and south wings of the building are narrower than and extend off the north and south elevations of the main block, leaving a single bay of 9/9 and 6/9 double-hung replacement windows in the first and second stories of the front and rear bays of the main block.

A broad walk leads from the sidewalk along Kansas Street to the main entrance door with two short flights of steps accommodating the grade change. A handicapped ramp runs from Iowa Avenue in front of the northern wing to the building's central entrance.

North and South Wings

The north and south wings are similar to each other in design and detail. The wings are two-story, three-bay long and two-bay-wide extensions, capped by slate-clad gable roofs that intersect with the hipped roof of the central pavilion. Brick inside end chimneys project from the roofline at the south end of the southern wing and the north end of the northern wing. The exterior walls are faced with brick laid in a five-course common bond, while the building corners are accented by limestone quoins. The west elevations of both wings have three symmetrical bays of 12/12 and replacement windows on the first story and 8/12 wood replacement windows on the second story.

The east elevations of the north and south wings similarly feature 12/12 and 8/8 windows on the first and second stories, while the center bay of the first story features a bowed bay like that of the center of the rear elevation of the main block.

The north and south end elevations of the two wings have two bays of windows to either side of the flush end chimneys. Two 12/12 windows are located on the first story, two 8/12 windows are located on the second story, and six-light fixed windows are located in the gabled ends. The south end wall of the south wing has an exposed basement with two double-leaf metal-frame glass doors that open onto a brick paved patio with brick planting beds aligning brick retaining

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walls. This patio, completed as part of the 2009 renovation, replaced a wide driveway on the site that provided access to garage doors, now fitted with the double doors described above.

Interior

The interior of the building, accessed from the central entry of the main block, leads into a foyer with passages and reading rooms located to either side. The central foyer has smooth plaster walls and retains its historic wood paneled wainscoting and crown molding. A terrazzo tile floor depicting a partial street layout of the City of Washington showing the larger Petworth neighborhood is part of the 2009 renovation. An alcove (originally stacks of books) is located to the west of the central foyer, separated from it by square wood columns. The bay window along the west wall of this alcove contains an original window seat with coffered paneled woodwork. From the foyer, arched doors on the north and south open into short passages that lead to reading rooms in the north and south wings. The door openings have round wood arches with keystones and are lined with coffered panels. The north passage contains double-leaf glass doors on its west wall, providing access to stairs leading to the upper floor and basement. The south passage contains an elevator.

The reading rooms in the north and south wings are similar in detail. Like the central foyer, both have coffered paneled wood wainscoting and crown molding with dentils. Fireplaces are located on-center of the end walls of the wings. The fireplaces are faced with marble and have wood mantels with carved pilasters and denticulated frieze.

INTEGRITY

The Petworth Library retains high integrity. The building is on its original site and retains its historic setting with MacFarland Junior High School and Roosevelt High School sharing the same large triangular-shaped parcel. The building has not had any major additions and its alterations have been limited on the exterior to new windows which match the historic ones in configuration, and the excavation of a side patio providing on-grade access to the building's interior. The building retains a high degree of integrity of design and materials. The building has been enhanced by the construction of its cupola, which had been part of the original 1938 design but had not been erected in a budget-saving move.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1938-1939

Significant Dates

1938; 1939

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Nathan Wyeth (Architect)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Petworth Library, built in 1938-1939, meets National Register Criterion A and C at the local level of significance with Architecture, Education and Community Planning and Development as its Areas of Significance. The library was one of the first branch libraries to be constructed in the District as part of a 1930s library expansion program. The library came to fruition largely

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through the efforts of head librarian Dr. George F. Bowerman, who proposed the extension of the city's library system to include neighborhood branch libraries, and through the work of local civic associations who continued to press for funding for the Petworth branch.

Petworth Library also meets National Register Criterion C, as an excellent example of the Georgian Revival style as applied to a library building in the District and an excellent example of the work of the District's third municipal architect, Nathan Wyeth. The Petworth Library was designed to conform to the Colonial Revival style of architecture that had been adopted by the Office of Municipal Architect for its public buildings and to be contextually compatible with the adjacent red-brick Roosevelt and MacFarland school buildings which preceded it on the site. The library, however, was rendered in a more domestic manner, particularly on the interior, where spaces are warm and intimate and include residential-like features such as fireplaces and wood paneled wainscoting. Deemed flexible and economical, Colonial Revival was seen as a fitting complement to the city's residential neighborhoods. Wyeth's buildings are consistently characterized by their high quality of design, construction and materials.

The Period of Significance Petworth Library is 1938-1939 representing its period of construction.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Education: The Petworth Library is significant under Education and Community Planning and Development because it was one of the first five libraries constructed through efforts that began with the fifteen-year library expansion program in the 1930s. The plan to expand D.C. libraries started with the efforts of one man, Dr. George F. Bowerman, who served as Librarian for the District of Columbia during the early twentieth century. It was Bowerman who proposed a fifteen-year library system expansion program to the District Commissioners in 1930, citing over-usage in existing libraries. Bowerman's proposal called for one of the most aggressive building programs for D.C. libraries. Under his plan, the district would construct fifteen new libraries across the city. Funding difficulties plagued the effort with the onset of the Great Depression. Despite this, civic organizations such as the Petworth Citizen's Association, the Petworth Home and School Association, and the Roosevelt High School Parent-Teacher Association played a critical role in advocacy and leadership, providing vocal support for the Petworth Library. The local civic organizations worked with the DC government to secure funding through various sources, including New Deal social programs of the Civic Works Association (CWA) and the Public Works Association (PWA). Although efforts failed for the larger fifteen library building campaign, enough local support was garnered by the efforts of the various local advocacy groups to include Petworth in a more limited plan for five new branch libraries, which also included neighborhood libraries in Tenley, Conduit Road, Howard, and Southwest Washington. Funding for this plan was eventually passed under the 1937 appropriations bill. The Petworth Library represents the culmination of efforts by various local

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advocacy and neighborhood groups and civic leaders to ensure library expansion in the District at the height of Great Depression.

Architecture: The Petworth Library has Architecture as its Area of Significance as it is an excellent example of the Georgian Revival style, in particular as the style is applied to a neighborhood library. The design of the library allowed the Office of the Municipal Architect to achieve a formal Georgian Revival design characterized by scale and symmetry and detailing that included limestone quoining, cornice moldings, and a classically inspired door surround featuring Ionic columns crowned by decorative urns.

A notable distinctive achievement of the design is the intended desire to create a home-like atmosphere, conveying the comfortable home instead of a formal institution. This is achieved through its use of semicircular bay windows with window seats, and the inclusion of fireplaces in the reading rooms, while also maintaining the formal Georgian-style crown moldings, interior door surrounds, paneled wainscoting and classically inspired fireplace manels, all of which invoked the interior elements of a Georgian mansion.¹

The Petworth Library represents an excellent example of municipal architecture early in the caereer of Nathan Wyeth, who became the third person to serve in the post of Municipal Architecture following the death of his predecessor Albert Harris. The library represents one of the finest Georgian Revival designs executed during Wyth's early years as Municipal Architect and it represents the continuation of the Colonial design ideal established by his predecessor Albert Harris. Wyeth served as Municipal Architect from 1934 until his retirement in 1946. In this role, he designed numerous schools and libraries, as well as the Municipal Building, Municipal Court, Police Court, Juvenile Court, Recorder of Deeds Building, the District of Columbia Armory, the Georgetown University library, and a number of fire houses. His school buildings included the Coolidge (1934-37) and Wilson (1932-35) High Schools, Banneker (1939) and Jefferson (1939-40) Junior High Schools, and the Lafayette (1931, addition 1938) and Patterson (1945) Elementary Schools.²

Community Planning and Development: The Petworth Library also represents a notable local community planning effort undertaken by the City to harmonize design elements of three monumental public buildings within the Petworth neighborhood constructed during the 1920s and 1930s. Although built on a smaller scale, design elements of the library were intended to be compatible and contextualize with the architecture of the two adjacent school buildings, Roosevelt High School and the MacFarland Jr. High School, both constructed earlier in the 1920s and 1930s. All three resources, Petworth Library, MacFarland Junior High School, and Roosevelt Senior High School represent likely the finest examples of early twentieth century site contextualization that involved local public architecture executed on Georgian/Colonial Revival designs within the portion of Northwest Washington D.C. beyond the National Mall.

¹ Petworth Library History. Obtained at <https://www.dclibrary.org/node/734>, 7 November 2017.

² *Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960*, E-19.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The campaign to build a branch library in Petworth was a collective, community effort. In 1927, the *Washington Post* published a letter written by Gertrude Norcross, chairman of the Petworth Women's Club's library committee, which called on the District Commissioners to endorse the five-year building program for library extension in the District. With the support of the Petworth Citizen's Association, the Petworth Home and School Association, and the MacFarland Junior High Parent-Teacher Association, the Women's Club prepared a petition calling for a new public branch library, which was signed by almost 3,000 adult residents of the neighborhood. In the letter, Norcross stated that:

This large section of the District, with Petworth as the logical center, where nearly every home is occupied by the owner, has eleven public school buildings filled to overflowing, but has now no accessible library facilities. The establishment of a public library there would fill a much-needed want.³

In 1929, Dr. George F. Bowerman, librarian for the District of Columbia, presented a library plan to the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, now the National Capital Planning Commission, which proposed expanding the size of the central library building at Mount Vernon Square and increasing the number of branch libraries in the District. Bowerman cited the lack of branch libraries, the growing collection of books, and increased administrative requirements as factors that were straining the resources and facilities of the library system. In addition to the existing three major, and four minor, branch libraries, Bowerman called for the construction of thirteen new branch libraries.⁴

Late in 1930, Bowerman submitted a fifteen-year library system expansion program to the District Commissioners. The program, based on library usage surveys begun in 1917, called for an unprecedented expansion of the District's library system. It proposed the construction of seven new Class A branch libraries, consisting of the Northeastern, Georgetown, Petworth, Municipal Center Annex, Dupont Circle, Downtown, and Columbia Road branches. It also proposed ten new Class B branch libraries at Anacostia, Southwest Washington, Eckington, Shaw, Cathedral, Brightwood, Howard, Bureau of Standards, Woodridge, and Trinidad. The eight new Class C libraries proposed included facilities at Sixteenth Street, Chevy Chase, Cleveland Avenue, Brookland, Tenley, Congress Heights, Keene, and Wesley Heights. A new sub-branch at Deanwood was also proposed. Under the plan, projects to be completed during the first five years included additions to the Central Library, construction of the Petworth and Georgetown Class A branch libraries, and the conversion of the Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church on John Marshall Place into a branch library. At the time, the estimated cost of the expansion program was estimated to be approximately \$3,879,648.⁵

³ Gertrude Norcross, "Petworth Wants Own Library," letter to the editor, *Washington Post*, December 4, 1927, S2.

⁴ "Park Commission to Study Library Extension Plans," *Washington Post*, April 27, 1929, 20.

⁵ "Plans 15-Year Program of Enlargement Costing \$3,879,648," *Washington Post*, April 19, 1931, 21.

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By 1930, the District had already acquired the property for the new library, located at the corner of Kansas Avenue, Georgia Avenue, and Upshur Street. N.W. In his library budget request for 1932, Dr. Bowerman sought from the District Commissioners \$150,000 for the construction and equipping of the new Petworth Library.⁶

The Petworth Citizen's Association established a library committee, composed of "representatives from the various religious and civic organizations of the community" to coordinate their campaign. A "mass meeting" was held in June of 1930 at the Barnard School. Present were Commissioner Herbert B. Crosby, Public Librarian Dr. George F. Bowerman, and Frank Varney, president of the Police Association.⁷

The following month, in July of 1930, Bowerman, in a radio broadcast, furthered the argument for new library facilities, calling on Congress to approve his funding request. Bowerman stated that, "we estimate that only about one-third of the people of the District have branch libraries reasonably convenient to their homes or offices."⁸ The following Spring, In April of 1931, in a newspaper article announcing the proposed fifteen-year plan, Bowerman related that:

There are today only three branch libraries and only five subbranches. Other American cities of a similar size have an average of 20 branches. Cincinnati has 33, Minneapolis has 21, Portland, Oregon. 17, and Louisville 21. They are smaller cities.⁹

In a 1933 editorial, the *Washington Post* echoed Bowerman's calls for expanded library service in the District:

The people of Washington are deprived of easy access to reading facilities. Although nearly 50 per cent of the use of the Public Library is by children, these children in most cases must travel long distances to the Public Library or its branches, and they find these branches overcrowded.¹⁰

In 1933, the D.C. Commissioners, other District officials, and representatives of North Washington civic organizations held a meeting to discuss the possibility of using Civil Works Administration (CWA) funds for the construction of the library. The CWA was a temporary New Deal program that operated between 1933-1934 with the aim of providing jobs to unemployed manual laborers. The citizens called for \$550,000 of these funds to be allocated to the local CWA program, with \$125,000 designated towards construction of the library. The District Commissioners expressed concerns regarding the allocation of the funds but agreed to further consider the request.¹¹

Late in 1933, a consortium of 59 northwest Washington civic organizations, led by Edward R. Williams, president of the Roosevelt High School Parent-Teacher Association, requested that the Public Works Administration (PWA) consider three local projects: the installation of new

⁶ "Capital Libraries Ask for \$704,572," *Washington Post*, June 1, 1930, M8.

⁷ "Citizens to Meet on Library Plans," *Washington Post*, June 16, 1930, 16.

⁸ "Need of Libraries Cited in Radio Talk," *Washington Post*, July 13, 1930, M13.

⁹ "Plans 15-Year Program of Enlargement Costing \$3,879,648," *Washington Post*, April 19, 1931, 21.

¹⁰ "The Public Library," *Washington Post*, July 26, 1933.

¹¹ "District May Plan Library for Petworth," *Washington Post*, December 17, 1933.

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heating plants in seventeen Washington schools, the construction of the Petworth Library, and the construction of additional new classrooms at Roosevelt High School.¹²

In January of 1934, the CWA approved the expenditure of \$1,500 to be used for the preparation of conceptual sketches for the new library.¹³

In 1935, trustees of the Public Library, facing continued difficulty in obtaining funds, seemed to back away from the ambitious fifteen-year plan first proposed in 1930, and instead approved a plan to prioritize five branch library projects: Petworth, Tenley, Conduit Road, Howard, and Southwest Washington. The cost of the five libraries was estimated at \$307,000, and the proposal was submitted to the PWA for consideration.¹⁴

In January of 1936, Congress approved a District budget for 1937 containing an appropriation of \$75,000, with an authorization of \$150,000, for the construction of the Petworth branch library. This was reduced \$97,480 from District estimates.¹⁵ Funding for the library formed part of a broader \$7,000,000 construction program authorized in the 1937 appropriation act, and in June of 1936 the District announced that the Office of the Municipal Architect would soon be commissioned to draft plans for the new building.¹⁶

In December of 1936, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed and approved the plans for the Petworth library.¹⁷ Original drawings for the library indicate that the Office of the Municipal Architect officially endorsed the final plans on July 30, 1937, and the District Commissioners provided final approval the following day.

Culminating a ten-year effort, the Petworth Branch Library was dedicated on January 28, 1939. Constructed at a final cost of \$180,000, the two-story, brick, Georgian Revival-style library featured assembly and children's rooms, as well as a section serving adult readers. In addition to members of the Petworth Women's Club, the Petworth Citizens Association, and other community and school groups, the dedication was attended by Representative Ross A. Collins, chairman of the District sub-committee of the House Committee on Appropriations, Representative Jennings Randolph, chairman of the House District Committee, Dr. George F. Bowerman, Librarian of the District of Columbia, and Assistant Engineer Commissioner Captain H. S. Bishop.¹⁸

The Petworth Neighborhood Library was a popular local resource from its initial opening. By 1949, 4,494 patrons had registered with the library and 199,616 books were borrowed that year alone. The library also provided resources for school children, including a weekly story hour on Saturdays. A "Linguaphone Room" provided recordings in French, German, Spanish, Italian,

¹² "Citizens to Ask PWA Hearing on 3 Projects," *Washington Post*, December 24, 1933, 10.

¹³ "Help of CWA to Untrained Women Near," *Washington Post*, January 11, 1934, 11.

¹⁴ "Five Libraries in Building Plan Urged for D.C.," *Washington Post*, March 16, 1935, 9.

¹⁵ James D. Secrest, "D.C. Estimate for 1937 Pared \$4,382,760 to \$43,100,000," *Washington Post*, January 7, 1936, 1;

"Highlights of 1937 Budget for District," *Washington Post*, January 7, 1936, 1.

¹⁶ "\$7,000,000 City Building Plan to Begin Soon," *Washington Post*, June 25, 1936, 13.

¹⁷ "Anacostia Seeks a Branch Library," *Evening Star*, D4.

¹⁸ "Petworth Library to Open," *Washington Post*, January 27, 1939, 17.

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Russian, Portuguese, Hebrew and English. A conference room was available by reservation to community groups for meetings and educational programs.¹⁹

In 2009, the Petworth Neighborhood Library underwent renovation to update and modernize the historic building. The first phase initiated in June 2009 involved exterior renovations that included window restoration, improved ADA access and the reconstruction of the cupola and balustrade on the roof. A second phase begun in November 2009 mostly involved interior renovations that improved lighting, restored original finishes and furniture, and updated the elevators and bathrooms.²⁰

Nathan Wyeth

Nathan Wyeth served as the third municipal architect and was appointed to the post following the death of his predecessor, Albert Harris in 1934. Wyeth received training at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris and worked for several years in New York at Carrere and Hastings before coming to Washington in 1899 to assume the role of Supervising Architect of the Treasury. He remained in this position until 1904, when he accepted a two-year appointment as chief designer for the Architect of the Capitol. When his term expired, Wyeth opened a private practice, which focused on residential design.

Although he established a lucrative private practice, Wyeth accepted the position of Municipal Architect in 1934 and served in this position until he retired in 1946. As Municipal Architect, Wyeth continued the tradition of his predecessor, Albert Harris, in favoring Georgian Revival and Colonial Revival styles for the city's public architecture.

¹⁹ DC Public Library. "Petworth Library History." Accessed online November 9, 2017 at <https://www.dclibrary.org/node/734>.

²⁰ Petworth Library History. Obtained at <https://www.dclibrary.org/node/734>, 7 November 2017.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Petworth Branch Library
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .7 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 38.94221 Longitude: -77.02614
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Petworth Branch Library
Name of Property

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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The National Register boundary for Petworth Library consists of the southeast portion of Lot 802 in Square 2915 in the District of Columbia. Lot 802 is bounded by Allison Street, N.W., Iowa Avenue, N.W., Thirteenth Street, N.W., and Upshur Road, N.W and includes Petworth Library, MacFarland Junior High School and Roosevelt High School. The portion of the lot being nominated for Petworth Library is demarcated by the fence line that surrounds the Roosevelt High School stadium and includes the library, its immediate grounds and the parking area reached from Iowa Avenue NW for library patrons to the north of the library building.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The library was built on at the southeast corner of Lot 802 after construction of MacFarland Jr. High School and Roosevelt High School on the same lot. The lot has been associated with these three public buildings since their respective dates of construction in the 1920s and 1930s. The boundaries drawn for Petworth Library include the library building, its parking lot and immediate grounds.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Eric Griffiths and John Gentry
organization: EHT Traceries
street & number: 440 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20001
[e-mail eric.griffitts@traceries.com](mailto:eric.griffitts@traceries.com) and john.gentry@traceries.com
telephone: 202-393-1199
date: October 2018

Petworth Branch Library
Name of Property

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Petworth Library
City or Vicinity: Washington, D.C.
County: State: DC
Photographer: Eric Griffitts (EHT Tracerics, Inc.)
Date Photographed: October 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0001.tif: East and South Elevations, Looking Northwest
- Photo 2: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0002.tif: East Elevation, Looking Northwest
- Photo 3: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0003.tif: Cornice Detail East Elevation of Central Block, Looking Northwest
- Photo 4: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0004.tif: Cupola, Looking Northwest
- Photo 5: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0005.tif: Main Entrance on East Elevation of Central Block Looking Northwest
- Photo 6: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0006.tif, Looking Southeast
- Photo 7: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0007.tif: West Elevation of Central Block, Looking Southeast
- Photo 8: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0008.tif: South Wing West and South Elevations, Looking Northeast

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County and State

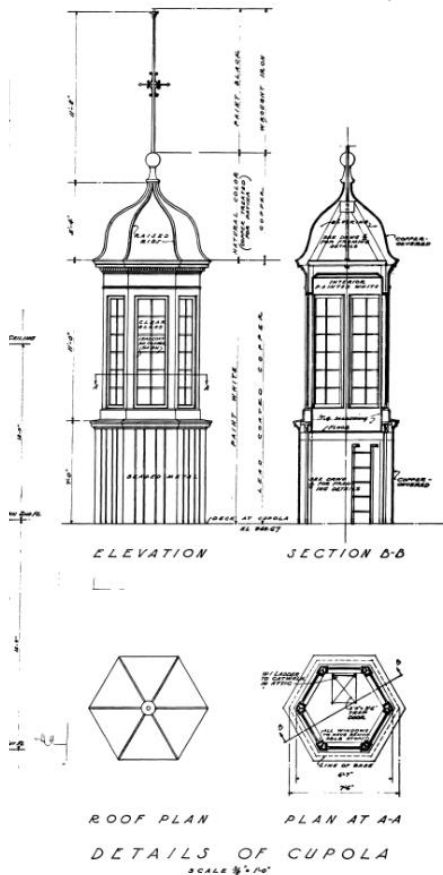
- Photo 9: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0009.tif: South Wing East Elevation, Looking Northwest
- Photo 10: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0010.tif: Interior Floor of Central Block, Looking North
- Photo 11: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0011.tif: Interior walls with Wainscotting, Looking Southeast
- Photo 12: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0012.tif: Interior Crown Molding
- Photo 13: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0013.tif: Window Seat in Bay Window of Central Block, Looking Southwest
- Photo 14: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0014.tif: Arched Doorway in Central Block, Looking Southwest
- Photo 15: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0015.tif: Interior Cafeteria, Looking Northwest
- Photo 16: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0015.tif: Interior of South Wing, Looking Northeast

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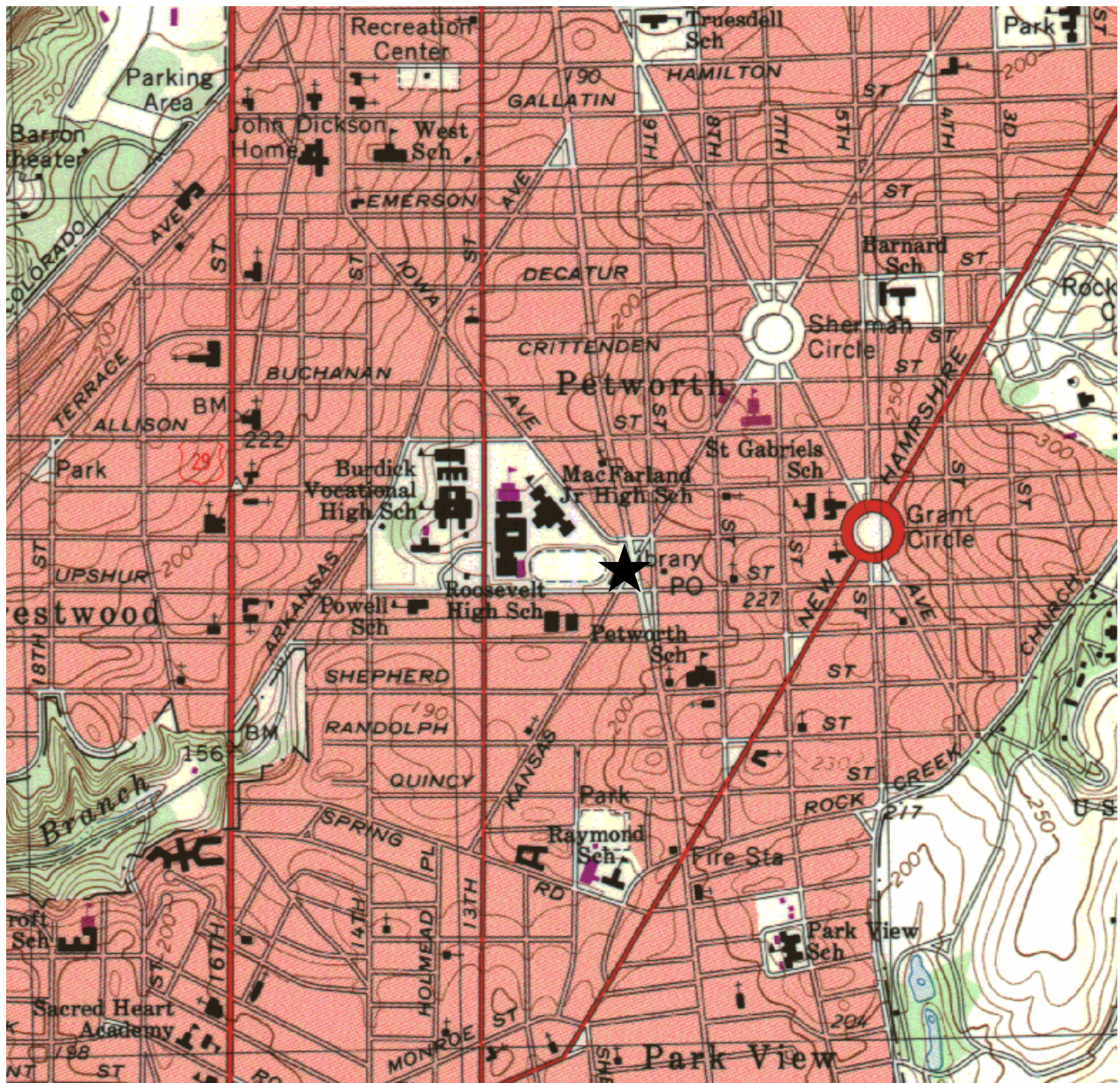
Image 1: Photo, ca 1949, showing Petworth Library without its cupola



**Image 2: Detail of Cupola, Petworth Branch Public Library, Drawing A-7, 1937
Office of the Municipal Architect**

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Geographical Site Map for Petworth Library
(USGS Washington West Quad)

Petworth Branch Library
Name of Property

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National Register Boundaries of Petworth Library (DC ATLAS Property Map)

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Name of Property

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County and State

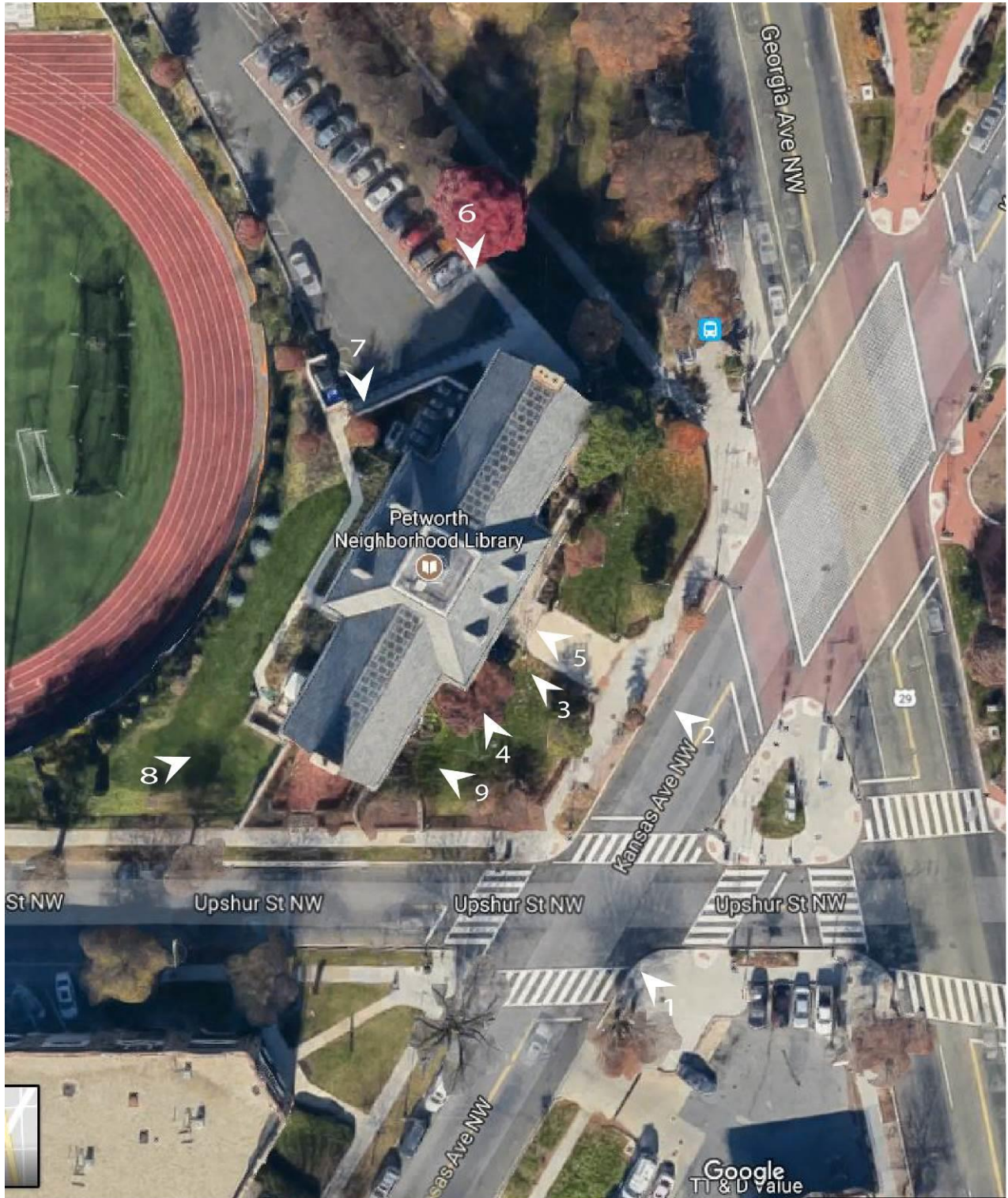


Photo Key Map

Petworth Branch Library
Name of Property

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County and State



**Photo 1: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0001.tif
East and South Elevations, Looking Northwest**

Petworth Branch Library
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
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**Photo 2: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library, _0002.tif
East Elevation, Looking Northwest**



Photo 3: DC_Cornice Detail East Elevation of Central Block_0003.tif, Looking Northwest

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**Photo 4: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0004.tif
Cupola, Looking Northwest**



**Photo 5: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0005.tif
Main Entrance on East Elevation of Central Block, Looking Northwest**

Petworth Branch Library
Name of Property

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**Photo 6: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library _0006.tif
West (rear) elevation of Central Block_Looking Southeast**



**Photo 7: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library _0007.tif
West Elevation of Central Block, Looking Southeast**

Petworth Branch Library
Name of Property

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**Photo 8: DC_ Petworth Neighborhood Library_0008.tif,
South Wing West and South Elevations, Looking Northeast**



**Photo 9: DC_ Petworth Neighborhood Library_0009.tif
South Wing East Elevation, Looking Northwest**

Petworth Branch Library
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**Photo 10: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0010.tif,
Interior Floor of Central Block, Looking Looking North**



**Photo 11: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0011.tif
Interior walls with Wainscoting, Looking Southeast**

Petworth Branch Library
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Photo 12: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0012.tif
Interior Crown Molding



Photo 13: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0013.tif
Window Seat in Bay Window of Central Block, Looking Southwest

Petworth Branch Library
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**Photo 14: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library _0014.tif
Arched Doorway in Central Block, Looking Southwest**

Petworth Branch Library
Name of Property

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Photo 15: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0015.tif
Reading Room in South Wing, Looking Southwest



Photo 16: DC_Petworth Neighborhood Library_0016.tif
Interior of Reading Room in South Wing, Looking Northeast

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Washington, D.C.
County and State

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



BEGIN
SCHOOL
ZONE

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4200

PETWORTH
Library

Books • E-books • Audiobooks
DVDs • Music • Games
Computers • Internet • Printing
Workshops • Events • Study
Services • More...

MAILBOX











PETWORTH
library



LIBRARY

Lampshire Avenue

Grant Circle









GO GO!
TEAM





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Petworth Branch Library

Multiple Name: _____

State & County: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

Date Received: 10/19/2018 Date of Pending List: 11/5/2018 Date of 16th Day: 11/20/2018 Date of 45th Day: 12/3/2018 Date of Weekly List: _____

Reference number: SG100003149

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 12/3/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Petworth Branch Library is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Education, Architecture, and Community Planning and Development. The handsome, red brick building reflects the city's aggressive, early twentieth-century efforts to significantly expand library and educational services to outlying city neighborhoods. Funded under Depression-era PWA programs, with considerable local community support, the library was completed in 1938-39 to plans drawn up by the Office of Municipal Architect under Nathan C. Wyeth. The building is an excellent local example of twentieth century Period Revival/Georgian Revival-style civic design.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C.

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 12/3/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MEMO

DATE: October 16, 2018

TO: Paul Lusignan

FROM: Kim Williams *KW*

RE: Transmittal Letter for Petworth Branch Library National Register Nomination

Please find enclosed two disks for Petworth Branch Library National Register nomination. The enclosed Disk 1 (of 2) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination. The enclosed Disk 2 (of 2) contains photographs as per the NR photo requirements.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MEMO

DATE: November 27, 2018

TO: Paul Lusignan

FROM: Kim Williams *KW*

RE: Re-Submissions for Petworth Library, Roosevelt High School and MacFarland Junior High School National Register Nominations

Attention: Paul

Please find enclosed three disks with revisions to the National Register nominations for Petworth Library, MacFarland Junior High School and Roosevelt High School. These disks provide revised boundary descriptions and boundary maps for each nomination, along with other minor text revisions. Each disk labeled Disk 1 (of 2) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination and should replace the previously submitted disks. Disks 2 (of 2) were previously submitted, so are not included here.